

United States Postal Service

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destruction or transfer. Included is the authority to issue records management policy and to delegate or take appropriate action if that policy is not adhered to or if questions of interpretation of procedure arise.

[40 FR 45721, Oct. 2, 1975, as amended at 44 FR 51223, Aug. 31, 1979; 60 FR 57344, Nov. 15, 1995; 68 FR 56558, Oct. 1, 2003]

§ 261.3 Policy.

It is the policy of the Postal Service:

(a) To, as appropriate, create, preserve, protect and disclose records which contain adequate and proper documentation of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, operations, procedures, activities and transactions of the Postal Service,

(b) To reduce to an absolute minimum the records holdings of the Postal Service by strict adherence to established records retention schedules.

[40 FR 45721, Oct. 2, 1975, as amended at 44 FR 51223, Aug. 31, 1979]

§ 261.4 Responsibility.

(a) The Manager, Records Office, under the Privacy Office, administers the Postal Service release of information and privacy of information programs with the assistance of FOIA coordinators in the Consumer Affairs function of area and district offices.

(b) The Chief Privacy Officer, under the Vice President and Consumer Advocate, is responsible for administering records and information management policies and for the compliance of all handbooks, directives, and instructions in support of this policy.

(c) Postal Service managers are responsible for administering records and information management policies and for complying with all handbooks, directives, and instructions in support of this policy.

[64 FR 41290, July 30, 1999, as amended at 68 FR 56558, Oct 1, 2003]

PART 262—RECORDS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT DEFINITIONS

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AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 552, 552a; 39 U.S.C. 401.

SOURCE: 49 FR 30693, Aug. 1, 1984, unless otherwise noted.

§ 262.1 Purpose and scope.

This part contains the official definition of those basic records and information management terms that are frequently used throughout Postal Service regulations and directives.

§ 262.2 Officials.

(a) *Chief Privacy Officer.* The Chief Privacy Officer (CPO) is responsible for the issuance of policy on the protection of privacy and the release of Postal Service records with the power to authorize the disclosure of such records and to delegate or take appropriate action if that policy is not adhered to or if questions of interpretation or procedure arise. The CPO directs the activities of the Privacy Office and the Records Office.

(b) *Manager, Records Office.* The Manager, Records Office, manages the Records Office, and is responsible for establishing procedures and guidelines to ensure that record management practices are in compliance with the Privacy Act and FOIA. The Manager, Records Office, may also delegate or take appropriate action if policies are not adhered to or if questions of interpretation or procedures arise.

(c) *Records Custodian.* The postmaster or other head of a facility such as an area vice president, district manager, or head of a postal installation or department who maintains Postal Service records. Vice presidents are the custodians of records maintained at Headquarters. Senior medical personnel are the custodians of restricted medical records maintained within postal facilities.

(d) *Information System Executive.* The Postal Service official who prescribes the existence of and the policies for an information system; usually this is a Vice President.

(e) *Records Office.* The Records Office is responsible for the issuance of policy on the maintenance and disposition of

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Postal Service records and information, and to delegate or take appropriate action if such policy is not adhered to or if questions of interpretation or procedure arise.

[49 FR 30693, Aug. 1, 1984, as amended at 51 FR 26385, July 23, 1986; 60 FR 57344, Nov. 15, 1995; 63 FR 6481, Feb. 9, 1998; 64 FR 41290, July 30, 1999; 68 FR 56558, Oct. 1, 2003]

§ 262.3 Information.

Data combined with the knowledge of its context and having the potential to serve a Postal Service use.

(a) *Sensitive information.* Information which has been identified by the USPS as *restricted* or *critical*.

(1) *Critical information.* Information that must be available in order that the Postal Service effectively perform its mission and meet legally assigned responsibilities; and for which special precautions are taken to ensure its accuracy, relevance, timeliness and completeness. This information, if lost, would cause significant financial loss, inconvenience or delay in performance of the USPS mission.

(2) *Restricted information.* Information that has limitations placed upon both its access within the Postal Service and disclosure outside the Postal Service consistent with the Privacy and Freedom of Information Acts.

(i) *Restricted mandatory.* Information that has limitations upon its internal access and that may be disclosed *only* in accordance with an Executive Order, public law, or other Federal statute and their supporting postal regulations.

(ii) *Restricted discretionary.* Information that has limitations upon its internal access and that *may* be withheld from external disclosure solely in accordance with postal regulations, consistent with the Freedom of Information Act.

(b) *Classified information (National Security).* Information about the national defense and foreign relations of the United States that has been determined under Executive Order 12356 to require protection against unauthorized disclosure and has been so designated.

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§ 262.4 Records.

Recorded information, regardless of media, format, or physical characteristics, including electronic data, developed or received by the Postal Service in connection with the transaction of its business and retained in its custody; for machine-readable records, a collection of logically related data treated as a unit.

(a) *Permanent record.* A record determined by the Records Office or the National Archives and Records Administration as having sufficient historical or other value to warrant continued preservation. (All other records are considered temporary and must be scheduled for disposal.)

(b) *Corporate records.* Those records series that are designated by the Records Office as containing information of legal, audit, obligatory or archival value about events and transactions of interest to the entire corporate body of the Postal Service. Corporate records are distinguished from operational records, which have value only in their day-to-day use, and from precedential files, which have value only as examples.

(c) *Active record.* A record that contains information used for conducting current business.

(d) *Inactive record.* A record that contains information which is not used for conducting current business, but for which the retention period has not yet expired.

(e) *Vital records.* Certain records which must be available in the event of a national emergency in order to ensure the continuity of Postal Service operations and the preservation of the rights and interests of the Postal Service, its employees, contractors and customers. There are two types of vital records: Emergency Operating Records and Rights and Interests Records.

(1) *Emergency operating records.* Certain vital records necessary to support essential functions of the Postal Service during and immediately following a national emergency.

(2) *Rights and interest records.* Certain vital records maintained to ensure the preservation of the rights and interests